

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims to read as follows.

31
1. (Currently Amended) A sanitary napkin comprising a central absorbent pad, the central absorbent pad having a liquid pervious cover layer, a liquid impervious barrier layer and an absorbent core between the cover layer and barrier layer, a longitudinal centerline, a lateral centerline, a pair of opposite longitudinal side edges, a first distal end and an opposite second distal end, a flap extending laterally outward from each longitudinal side edge along a line of juncture, each flap ~~being substantially coextensive with~~ extending substantially along the lateral centerline and adapted to fold over a crotch portion of an undergarment in use, the central absorbent pad further comprising two preferential bending axes, each axis being inward from and adjacent to a respective longitudinal side edge and extending obliquely with respect to the longitudinal centerline, the axes converging towards the longitudinal centerline in the first distal end of the central absorbent pad.

2. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein said preferential bending axes extend from the lateral centerline to the first distal end.

3. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein said preferential bending axes extend from the second distal end to the first distal end.

4. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the first distal end has a width of less than 30 mm.

5. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the first distal end has a width of about 15 mm to 20 mm.

6. (Previously presented) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the central absorbent pad has a pair of opposite side margins, each side margin being adjacent a respective preferential bending line and adapted to fold along said respective preferential bending line, the side margin being capable of being folded over an edge of a wearer's undergarment in use.

7. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 6, wherein each side margin has an adhesive attachment means on a garment faceable side thereof that is adapted to allow a wearer to adhesively affix the side margins to their undergarment in use.

8. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the side margins have a lateral dimension as measured from the preferential bending line to the longitudinal side edge of at least 7 mm.

9. (Original) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the side margins have a lateral dimension as measured from the preferential bending line to the longitudinal side edge is preferably about 10 to 20 mm.

10. (Currently amended) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein said two preferential bending axes are structured and arranged to permit at least a portion of said central absorbent pad to be folded along a respective one of said preferential bending ~~lines~~ axes.

11. (Currently amended) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 10, wherein said portion of said central absorbent pad folded along said respective one of said preferential bending ~~lines~~ axes is structured and arranged to alter said central absorbent pad from an initial substantially hourglass shape to a tapered shape.

12. (Previously presented) A sanitary napkin comprising a central absorbent pad, the central absorbent pad having a liquid pervious cover layer, a liquid impervious barrier layer and an absorbent core between the cover layer and barrier layer, a longitudinal centerline, a lateral centerline, a pair of opposite longitudinal side edges, a first distal end and an opposite second distal end, a flap extending laterally outward from each longitudinal side edge along a line of juncture, each flap being adapted to fold over a crotch portion of an undergarment in use, the central absorbent pad further comprising two preferential bending axes, each axis being inward from and adjacent to a respective

longitudinal side edge and extending obliquely with respect to the longitudinal centerline, the axes converging towards the longitudinal centerline in the first distal end of the central absorbent pad, at least a portion of said central absorbent pad being structured and arranged to be foldable along at least one of said two preferential bending axes to alter said central absorbent pad from an initial state to a tapered state.

13. (Currently amended) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 12, wherein each flap is extends substantially ~~coextensive with~~ along the lateral centerline.

14. (Previously presented) A sanitary absorbent article as defined in claim 12, wherein the central absorbent pad has a pair of opposite side margins, each side margin being adjacent a respective preferential bending line and adapted to fold along said respective preferential bending line to thereby alter said central absorbent pad from said initial state to said tapered state, each side margin being capable of being folded over an edge of a wearer's undergarment in use.
